

THE TAXATION PROBLEM.

A CONFERENCE OF SENATORS AND ASSEMBLYMEN OF BOTH PARTIES.

THE VARIOUS TAXATION BILLS BEFORE THE LEGISLATURE DISCUSSED; AND A COMMITTEE APPOINTED TO DRAW UP A MEASURE ACCEPTABLE TO ALL THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE FARMING COUNTIES.

FROM THE REGULAR CORRESPONDENT OF THE TRIBUNE.

Albany, April 2.—A secret conference was held in the Assembly parlors this morning by Senators and Assemblymen who especially represent farming districts in the State. The meeting was held before the Legislature met, and was for the purpose of uniting upon some bill that would favor a reformation of the taxation laws of the State; such a reformation as will diminish the taxation upon real estate and increase that upon personal property.

It is unquestionable that the farmers of the State are feeling poor. That is the testimony of all the Senators and Assemblymen who live in rural neighborhoods. The conference of to-day was attended by Senators Erwin, Vedder, Saxton and Lincoln, and Assemblymen Mally, W. J. Lane, Gifford, W. L. Brown, Dempsey, Fish, Green, Peck, Ryan, O. F. Lane, Davis, I. Sam Johnson, Truesdell, Whipple, Wallis, Keeler, Devo and many other Senators and Assemblymen. The political parties were about equally represented. Assemblyman Davis, of Delaware County, was made the chairman. One after another of the taxation bills before the Legislature was taken up and debated. Objections were made, and arguments in favor of the bills were uttered. Although it has been represented that the farmers are strongly in favor of a "listing" bill, the drift of sentiment among those who attended the conference was that none ought to be passed; it would be too inequitable a system.

The bill of Assemblyman Gifford, Master of the state Grange, giving the owners of real estate a local right to have their debts collected in submitting their property for taxation, was criticised by many of those present. Assemblyman Devo said that such a measure would lead inevitably to the creation of imaginary debts, and there would be no property left for taxation. A good many of those present said that the holder of the mortgage should be taxed for the share of property which he actually owns. It was pointed out, however, that such a law would apply to existing mortgages and could not be passed into relation to future ones.

It was decided to appoint a committee to draw up a taxation bill which should receive the support of former representatives in the Legislature. The committee appointed were Senators Erwin, Lane and O'Connor, and Assemblymen Ryan, O. F. Lane and Gifford. The Senate committee has two Republicans and one Democrat, and the Assembly committee two Democrats and one Republican. All of the members of this committee represent rural voters chiefly.

Assemblyman Gillette said in regard to the taxation problem and the efforts of those who attended the meeting this morning: "It may be that we can agree on one of the bills which have been introduced at this session, in case it is amended in some particulars. A bill has been introduced which would tax the land for the tax on the mortgage. This bill taxes the land first, and gives the holder of it a receipt to the amount of the tax on the mortgage. If he has a mortgage on the land, he will pay the tax, all right. Of course the Legislature cannot interfere with personal property."

Assemblyman Ryan, who is also a member of the committee, has taken his cue from Senator Hill. He is in favor of the mortgage bill, and he has reported to the next Legislature the result of his findings. He inclines to the local option plan of taxation.

TO FIX RATES FOR TELEPHONE SERVICE.

Albany, April 2 (Special).—Assemblyman Blumenthal introduced an important bill to-day in a measure entitled "An act creating Boards of Telephone Commissioners within cities having 600,000 inhabitants and over, defining their powers and duties, and duly composing the same of the Mayor and other officers of said cities." The first section of this bill provides that each commission shall consist of the Mayor, Controller and the President of the Board of Aldermen, who within thirty days after the passage of the act shall meet and elect a president. Within three months after this organization the boards must institute an inquiry into the cost of telephone service in their respective cities, and within a period of three months thereafter this has been done they must fix a rate for the monthly and yearly service for telephones. The same section gives the boards the power to subpoena witnesses and to send for books and papers to aid in prosecuting the inquiries. Assistance, which is to cost not more than \$2,000 a year, can be employed by the boards, but none of the employees of the boards can be stockholders or in any way interested in any telephone company.

When a rate has been fixed it shall be binding upon all companies, associations, etc., engaged in the business of furnishing telephone communications in the respective cities. This rate is not to apply to private service. It is to hold for one year from the date when adopted by the board. The board must make the annual report of the amounts of their receipts and disbursements, together with the list of their subscribers. The total yearly expenses of the commissions shall not be paid as other salaries are. This bill was drawn up by a representative of the New-York Board of Trade and Transportation.

REAL ESTATE VALUATIONS IN THIS STATE.

Albany, April 2 (Special).—In response to a resolution of the Assembly, asking the State Board of Assessors to give the valuation of the real estate in cities and towns of the State, the Board made the following report this morning:

The returned assessed real estate for 1889—the only available figures—upon which the State equalization for 1890 was made shows a total assessment for real estate of \$1,318,720,295. The assessed value of the State returned in 1889 a total of \$1,256,297,289, of which \$1,318,720,295 represented real estate of the city of New-York, \$407,000,000 in the city of Brooklyn, \$147,540,429 in the city of Buffalo, leaving for the remaining incorporated cities of the State \$563,631,689; excess of real estate in cities and villages, \$1,385,200,689. Railroads are included in all of these assessments.

BILLS THAT HAVE BECOME LAWS.

Albany, April 2.—The following have become laws: Chapter 120—Amending the Penal Code relative to the threatening letter of a woman.

Chapter 121—Establishing the location of Chester-st., in the Twenty-sixth Ward, Brooklyn.

Chapter 122—Amending the charter of Middletown relative to the powers of the mayor and the suspension of officers.

Chapter 123—Authorizing the Board of Claims to hear and determine the claim of Julien T. Davies.

Chapter 124—Authorizing the Board of Claims to hear and determine the claim of Herbert P. Hissell.

Chapter 125—Appropriating \$10,000 for the publication of the Colonial Statutes of the State.

Chapter 126—Authorizing the Board of Claims to hear and determine the claim of James G. Johnson.

Chapter 127—Appropriating \$5,000 for the continuing expenses of the Legislature.

THE BRIDGE EXTENSION BILL A LAW.

Albany, April 2.—The bill authorizing the trustees of the New-York and Brooklyn Bridge to improve the terminal facilities of the bridge has become a law.

MONEY FOR THE CAPITOL BUILDING.

Albany, April 2 (Special).—When the bill appropriating nearly \$600,000 for the Capitol was reported from the Ways and Means Committee this morning, Mr. Nolan, of Albany, tried to have it passed immediately. He said that 200 men had been discharged from the work on the Capitol because the appropriation of last year had run out. The Assembly committee had increased the appropriation by \$400,000 over the amount fixed by the Senate. Mr. McClelland said that the added amount was for furniture for the completed parts of the building. Later, after Mr. Devo

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BRIDGE BILLS IN THE SENATE.

THE RAINY MEASURE PASSED, AND AN EFFORT MADE TO REVIVE BIRKETTS BILL.

PROPOSED COMMISSIONS TO SELECT SITES FOR BRIDGES OVER THE EAST RIVER—THE WORLD'S FAIR MEASURE DEBATED.

BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.

Albany, April 2.—Senator Fassett is preparing a bill creating a commission to select sites for bridges over the East River between New-York and Brooklyn. It is presumed this bill will be introduced upon the New-York Rapid Transit act, and will provide for the sale of the bridge franchises to the highest bidder. A bill will be introduced tomorrow, it is said, instituting a commission of six persons to select sites for East River bridges and to sell the franchises. The men who are to appoint this commission are to be Mayor Grant of New-York and Mayor Chapin of Brooklyn.

Senator Jacobs gave notice to-day of his intention to move a suspension of the rules, in order to resuscitate the dead bill of Senator Birkett for two East River bridges. Senator Fassett said that of course such a notice could be given, but the Birkett bill could not be galvanized into life.

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